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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 003138

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP
STATE FOR EAP/K

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KU](#) [KN](#) [KS](#)

SUBJECT: NORTH KOREA TO OPEN EMBASSY IN KUWAIT

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones for reason 1.5 (d)

(C) During a courtesy call with the Ambassador on July 14, ROK Ambassador In Kook Park stated that the GOK recently agreed to upgrade the status of North Korea's existing trade office to that of an Embassy. This was in response to repeated requests from Pyong Yang that peaked during the fighting in Iraq. Although he did not give a precise date, Ambassador Park said the government of North Korea would be opening its embassy in the near future. Comment: Given the number of North Korean nationals working in the State of Kuwait (about 3,000, according to Ambassador Park), the government's desire to establish an embassy here is understandable from a practical point of view. Our concern, however, is that the move not prove a harbinger of a return to the policy of active non-alignment practiced by Kuwait prior to the Gulf War.

JONES